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ABSTRACT

This book examines the education of rural girls in Kenya and reports on a study of factors influencing girls' educational success or failure. Three chapters provide background on traditional values and practices affecting girls' education; describe Kenya's education system, including preprimary, primary (grades 1-8), secondary, university, technical, and adult education; and discuss current problems impeding Kenyan girls' education, especially in rural areas: high cost of schooling, fear of pregnancy and sexual harassment, patriarchal values and marriage customs, growing demand for domestic labor in urban areas (which draws rural girls to the city), distance of schools from home, classroom culture favoring boys, and high dropout. Interviews and questionnaires were used to study 182 female seventh-graders in 9 rural schools in Murang'a district. Academic achievement was affected by student's age; parents' education, particularly father's education; family economic status; family environment; and the student's intensity of study. Family environment and study habits were related, in that a greater number of siblings, lack of good lighting, and greater time spent on household chores contributed to poor study habits. In the first and last chapters, the book is framed by the story of a village girl who had high aspirations and was encouraged and motivated to be an achiever by a model teacher. Her achievement became a springboard for helping other girls in her village. Appendix describes variables and methodology. (Contains 128 references.) (SV)

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